

**HONEY CREEK
CLASS II NATURAL-SCIENTIFIC STATE NATURAL AREA**

COUNTY:	Pickett	ACREAGE:	109
7.5° QUADRANGLE:	Honey Creek	OWNERSHIP:	National Park Service
PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROVINCE:	Cumberland Plateau	YEAR DESIGNATED:	1973

DESCRIPTION:

Honey Creek is a 109-acre natural area in Pickett County. It is one of two designated state natural areas located in the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (BSFNRRRA) owned and managed by the National Park Service. It was previously a Bowater Pocket Wilderness Area before the BSFNRRRA was established. One of its most outstanding features is the incredibly scenic overlook 250 feet above the South Fork of Cumberland River. It is noted in various hiking guidebooks that Honey Creek provides spectacular scenery. There is a rugged five-mile loop trail that traverses much of the gorge. It crosses many small streams, several cascading waterfalls, sheer cliffs, and passes under large rock houses once used by Native Americans. Hikers are advised to allow five to eight hours for this hike and to be in good physical condition. An alternate, shorter, non-looping trail leaves from the parking area and goes straight to the overlook for hikers not wishing to take the complete hike.

The gorge forest at Honey Creek is a diverse mixed mesophytic forest comprised of tulip poplar, eastern hemlock, basswood, magnolia, yellow buckeye, beech, maples, oaks and hickories and other tree species. The ever-present rhododendron thicket is common here. The upland is a typical dry plateau oak - pine forest. There are small sandstone opening that form glades on exposed bluffs. The federally listed Virginia spiraea (*Spiraea virginiana*) occurs in the rocky bars along the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River just below the Honey Creek overlook. The Virginia spiraea is also found at other locations in the BSFNRRRA, as is another federally listed species, the Cumberland rosemary (*Conradina verticillata*).

SITE MANAGEMENT:

Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area Park Headquarters, 4564 Leatherwood Road, Oneida, Tennessee 37841, (865) 569-9778. Division of Natural Heritage, 401 Church Street, 14th Floor L&C Tower, Nashville, TN 37243-0447, (615) 532-0431.

PUBLIC ACCESS:

Public access is allowed; parking and hiking trails are provided.

DIRECTIONS:

From Harriman, Tennessee, which is west of Knoxville and just north of I-40, take U.S. Highway 27 north into Scott County to the town of Elgin. In Elgin, take State Route 52. Go about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile and bear right onto a paved county road toward the town of West Robbins. After West Robbins, continue straight and pass the Crossroads Church on the right. After the church, bear hard left and cross the Clear Fork River. Continue on a north bearing for about 3.5 miles. At a point where the road turns hard to the west-southwest, the turnoff to the parking area and trailhead will be on the right.